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NSC BRIEFING   11 February 1959

IRAN-USSR

I. After nearly two weeks of talks in Tehran, Soviet-Iranian discus-
    sions about a nonaggression treaty ended abruptly about midnight
    on 10 February, because of Iranian insistence on remaining in
    Baghdad Pact and signing bilateral with USA.

    A. Iranian Prime Minister Eqbal says the Soviet representatives,
        headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Semenov, became "abusive,
        insulting and very threatening."

    B. The Russian delegation returned to Moscow on 11 February
        leaving behind a fourteen page document of insults, accusa-
        tions and threats. The Iranians have the impression that the
        USSR is almost at the point of breaking off diplomatic relations.

    C. The Shah and Eqbal are greatly concerned over the possibility
        of "dangerous repercussions" from the Soviet Union, which the
        Russians warned would "become manifest shortly."

II. In view of the circumstances surrounding the breakdown in the talks,
    and the fact that Iran may soon sign the agreement with US, the re-
    action from Moscow will probably be vigorous, although to get our
    aid and support Iranians may have exaggerated. Possible courses
    of Soviet action include:

    A. Increased propaganda attacks aimed primarily at the Shah,

    B. Political and economic pressures, including withdrawal of
        Soviet ambassador, if not an actual diplomatic break.

    C. Subversion,

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D. Threats to invoke the Soviet-Iranian treaty of 1921 coupled with military activity near the Iranian border designed to intimidate the Iranian Government,

E. Possibly even an assassination attempt against the Shah.

F. We do not expect direct military action by the USSR against Iran.